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Book Review

THE HITTITE PROBLEM

The publication of Hittite inscriptions goes on apace.¹ The key to their meaning is in the keeping of the Ottoman Museum at Constantinople. There lies a body of Hittite material discovered at Boghaz-Keui in Asia Minor, the ancient capital of the Hittite kingdom. Some of these Boghaz-Keui inscriptions are written in the cuneiform character characteristic of Assyrian. This opens the door to the translation of Hittite. The translation, however, must await a recovery of health on the part of Professor Winckler, to whom the right of translation belongs.

The place of the Hittites in the history of western Asia was a large one. They were worthy foemen of the two great aspirants for supreme dominion, Babylon and Egypt. Their first conflict with the Babylonians goes back to the days of Samsuditana (*ca.* 1800 B.C.), the great-grandson of Hammurabi. Their power reached its greatest height in the thirteenth century B.C. and they pass from sight in the twelfth century. A satisfactory history of the Semitic world cannot be written until the records of the Hittites are understood.

The volume before us presents photographs and copies of the Hittite inscriptions studied by the Cornell Expedition to Asia Minor and the Assyro-Babylonian Orient. The special responsibility for the work upon this volume is carried by Mr. B. B. Charles. Each inscription is accompanied by brief notes regarding its location, condition, and paleographical characteristics. The work seems to have been done with thoroughness and intelligence. One wonders, however, whether some of the photographs would not have yielded better results if more care had been taken in the manipulation of light and shade. The inscriptions here given include some discovered by the Cornell Expedition; some previously known, but not published; and some previously published, but here presented in better form. They are all now rendered accessible to scholars and will doubtless yield rich returns to the historian when the translator has done his work. Cornell University is to be congratulated upon the high character of the work of its expedition and the worthy form given to its publications.

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¹ A. T. Olmstead, B. B. Charles, and J. E. Wrench. *Travels and Studies in the Nearer East*, Vol. I, Part 2: "Hittite Inscriptions." [The Cornell Expedition to Asia Minor and the Assyro-Babylonian Orient, organized by J. R. S. Sterrett.] Ithaca, N.Y.: Andrus & Church, 1911. Pp. 49. \$1.50.